

THE HANFORD SITE

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DOE and EPA sign Record of Decision for continued cleanup of Hanford's 100-BC Area

DOE, EPA, WA Agree on Path Forward for Key Hanford Area

RICHLAND, Wash. – The Department of Energy (DOE) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, with concurrence from the Washington State Department of Ecology, have signed a record of decision (ROD) for continued cleanup work at Hanford's 100-BC Area.

"This action marks an important milestone at Hanford," said Michelle Pirzadeh, Acting Regional Administrator for EPA's Region 10 office in Seattle. "It represents more than two decades of hard work and the removal of over 3 million tons of contaminated soil from the 100 Area. It means we can now move on to the next cleanup action and continue to make progress protecting people and the environment."

The ROD will provide for additional soil excavation and treatment from one waste site, monitored natural attenuation for contaminated groundwater, and institutional controls for soil and groundwater.

"A significant amount of work by the Department and EPA, along with robust involvement with the state, tribal nations and the public, facilitated this record of decision," said Brian Vance, manager of the Office of River Protection and Richland Operations Office. "The Department is committed to continuing the Hanford Site cleanup mission in a way that protects the environment and is safe for site workers and the public."

Located in the northwest portion of the 580-square-mile Hanford Site, the 100 BC Area covers 4.5 square miles and includes two deactivated nuclear reactors that produced plutonium from 1944 to 1969. The B Reactor has been preserved as part of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park ([add link](#)) and the C Reactor is in Interim Safe Storage. The reactors and associated processing facilities generated large quantities of liquid and solid waste that contained radionuclides and chemicals. This waste contaminated the soil and groundwater beneath portions of the 100-BC Area.

Significant cleanup progress has been made in the 100-BC Area pursuant to three interim records of decisions issued by the EPA and DOE between 1995 and 2000.

Since 1996, 104 facilities used to support B and C Reactor operations were demolished and removed and approximately 3 million tons of soil and debris were removed, treated (as necessary), and disposed of in Hanford's engineered landfill for low-level radioactive waste, the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility. In 2019, the Department held a public comment period on the proposed plan for the current Record of Decision. The Department received input from tribal nations, government agencies, advocacy groups, and members of the public.

The additional remediation work in the 100 B/C Area will begin as soon as a remedial action work plan is established and approved by the EPA.

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The Department of Energy (DOE) is engaged in one of the great public works of this century at the Hanford Site near Richland, Washington. Responsible for the federal government's cleanup of the legacy of more than 40 years of producing plutonium through the 1980s, DOE is transforming the site back into a 24/7 operations mode to treat tank waste from the production era. The DOE Office of River Protection (ORP) is responsible for the safe and efficient retrieval, treatment and disposal of the 56 million gallons of chemical and radioactive waste stored in Hanford's 177 underground tanks. The mission includes building and commissioning the world's largest radioactive waste treatment plant, which will immobilize the legacy tank waste through vitrification. The DOE Richland Operations Office is responsible for all remaining Hanford cleanup and is currently focused on stabilizing and demolishing former plutonium production structures, excavating and disposing of contaminated soil and waste, treating contaminated groundwater, and configuring Hanford Site infrastructure for the future, with an emphasis on supporting the tank waste mission. Hanford Site work is conducted by a federal and contractor workforce of approximately 11,000 personnel. Visit www.hanford.gov for more information about the Hanford Site.



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